



Newsletter

**Study section:
Kentucky 80
East of Somerset
to I-75
South of London**



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Public Meetings

Monday, November 29, 2004

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
London Community Center
529 South Main Street
London, KY 40741

Tuesday, November 30, 2004

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Center for Rural Development
2292 South Highway 27
Somerset, KY 42501

Project History

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 provided for a national East-West corridor (I-66) feasibility study which concluded that the entire coast-to-coast corridor did not meet the economic feasibility criteria. However, it was determined that further analysis could find some corridor segments to be feasible from a state or regional perspective.

In 1997, the University of Kentucky Transportation Center conducted a study for KYTC that concluded the Southern Kentucky Corridor of I-66 was feasible. The study identified the Somerset to London segment as a priority segment. Based on the results of this study, funding for the continued development of a Somerset to London corridor was established through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

As with previous conclusions, TEA-21 identified the Somerset to London segment as a priority corridor within the feasible portion of I-66. A planning study comparing alternate corridors between the two cities was completed in 2000.

The environmental and design activities of Phase 1-B are underway. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is scheduled to be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in the summer of 2005.

Current Scope of Project Phase 1-B



As you may recall from our June 2003 newsletter, the I-66 interstate project from Somerset to London was in Phase 1-A design. Basically, that meant that the designers and environmental personnel were studying 1,000-foot bands within the preferred corridor identified in the 2000 planning study. The information gathered during the study of the "bands" would enable our designers to develop preliminary alternates in Phase 1-B. Alternates were developed and presented to the members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) on July 13, 2004.

The CAC members reviewed and discussed the alternates shown on the map enclosed in the center of this newsletter. This development (Phase 1-B) has been initiated and is on-going. Extensive environmental surveys have been conducted on these alternates. Environmental baselines have been submitted to the Transportation Cabinet Division of Environmental Analysis for review. As they have throughout this project, the engineers will use the environmental information they receive to refine the alternates so that environmental impacts are minimized.

The upcoming meeting format is as follows:

- View design and environmental displays. Staff will be available to answer your questions from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Individual environmental and karst booths will be set up and will display an on-going PowerPoint presentation.
- A 5-minute introduction will be conducted every half hour.
- Flip charts will be available to post comments at the meeting.
- Questionnaire and comment sheets for the project will be available.



I-66 CITIZEN'S ADVISORY GROUP

The I-66 Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) consists of 20 persons, with representatives from both Somerset and London and a wide variety of interests. The group is organized into four subcommittees, each of which represents one of four major segments of interest within the community. The four subcommittees are Tourism/Economic Development; Communities; Environmental/Aesthetic; and Business.

Chairperson: Edwin Jones • **Co-Chairperson:** Mark McCowan

TOURISM/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Clay McKnight**
Cumberland Valley Area Development District
London
- **Ken Harvey**
London-Laurel County Tourism Commission
London
- **Bennie Garland**
So. KY RECC - Community Development Specialist
Russell Springs
- **Greg Jones**
Southern Kentucky Economic Development Corp.
Somerset
- **Ned Sheehy**
Executive Director - KY Motor Transport
Association
Frankfort
- **Dan Byers**
Support Member from Consulting Team

COMMUNITIES

- **Jim Costanzo**
Somerset
- **Lelan Wilson**
London
- **Verne J. Wright**
Somerset
- **Charles David Hawk**
Somerset
- **Mark McCowan**
Highlands Diversified Services
London
- **John Sacksteder**
Support Member from Consulting Team

ENVIRONMENT/AESTHETIC

- **Malvery Begley**
Kentuckians for the Commonwealth
London
- **Paul R. Feltner II**
London
- **Thomas Kean**
U.S. Forest Service
Somerset
- **Jeff Wiles**
Somerset
- **Patrick Angel**
Office of Surface Mining
London
- **Mitch Green**
Support Member from Consulting Team

BUSINESS

- **Carey Koplowitz**
London
- **Donald Bloomer**
Vice-President - Somerset-Pulaski Chamber of
Commerce
Somerset
- **Russell Bastin**
Somerset
- **Lawrence Kuhl**
County Judge-Executive, Laurel County
London
- **Edwin Jones**
London
- **Brian Cash**
Support Member from Consulting Team

DISTRICT OFFICE CONTACTS

Information is available at the District 8 (Somerset) and District 11 (Manchester) offices. You can contact Joe Cox, Project Manager, at the Somerset District office at 1660 US 27. Mr. Cox can also be reached by phone at 606-677-4017, or by email at Joe.Cox@ky.gov. You can also find information at the Manchester District office located at 100 Railroad Avenue. The contact person for the Manchester office is Joel Holcomb, Preconstruction Branch Manager, and he can be reached at 606-598-2145 or Joel.Holcomb@ky.gov. Written and oral comments can be submitted to these contacts at any time during this process.

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Environmental Update

Numerous environmental studies have been conducted and completed over the past year. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and its consultants have also continued to meet with various resource agencies throughout the year including the US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Kentucky Division of Water (including Wild Rivers Section).

Significant information was gathered in areas of historic structures, archaeology, hazardous material, aquatic systems, threatened and endangered species, air quality, traffic noise and karst.

Some of our more recent findings include:

- 1) Terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems were surveyed for threatened and endangered species in the project area. Bat surveys of listed species recovered the federally endangered Gray bat, the state special concern species Rafinesque big-eared bat, and the state threatened Evening bat. Mussel surveys were conducted at nine locations in Buck Creek, Sinking Creek and the Rockcastle River. A fresh dead Cumberlandian combshell (federally endangered) was found at Alternative D's crossing of Buck Creek. Fresh dead fluted kidney shells (state endangered) were found at the Buck Creek crossings of Alternatives K, KY80 Modified, KY80 Shifted and B. The occurrence of fresh dead shells suggests the presence of live populations nearby. No evidence of listed mussels was found at any crossings of the Rockcastle River or Sinking Creek. State listed plants were identified at several locations throughout the project corridor.
- 2) An extensive karst survey was conducted in October 2003. The purpose of this karst survey was to locate cave openings, sinkholes and other karst features throughout the project area and to investigate the ecology of the cave systems. A total of 1129 karst features were documented during the survey, including 190 caves in Pulaski County. The cave fauna survey was conducted in over 40 caves and several previously unidentified species were recovered as a result.
- 3) Historic and archaeological resources have been identified through an extensive survey of the project area. The first meeting of the Section 106 process was held on October 12, 2004. The Section 106 process investigates the project's effects on historic resources and provides the opportunity for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to comment on the project prior to implementation. Involvement in the Section 106 process provides consulting parties the opportunity to review project documentation and reports pertaining to the assessment of historic resources and, in turn provide information and assist in obtaining a consensus with project decisions involving historic resources. Section 106 and consulting party status request information was made a part of the approximately 12,000 newsletters mailed in July 2003, as well as two public meetings held in July 2003.



Two new maternity colonies for the Rafinesque's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus rafinesquii*) were located by the I-66 Ecological Team during field investigations. The Rafinesque's big-eared bat is a federal species of management concern, a state species of special concern, and is listed on the Forest Service's Sensitive Species List. An important site for this species was protected with a bat friendly gate erected by the Forest Service after it was identified by I-66 project biologists.

The Pottsville Escarpment which runs through the I-66 project is characterized by deeply cut streams which form impressive cliffhines and numerous waterfalls. The I-66 team is working toward avoidance and minimization of impacts to unique geologic features into the alignment location and design of potential build alternatives.



The presence of the Kentucky Lady's slipper (*Cypripedium kentuckiense*) was reported nearby the project during agency coordination. This orchid is listed as a state species of concern and is listed on the Forest Service's Sensitive Species List. The spanning of floodplains and appropriate minimization and mitigation of stream impacts if a build alternative is selected will help to protect habitat for this rare plant.

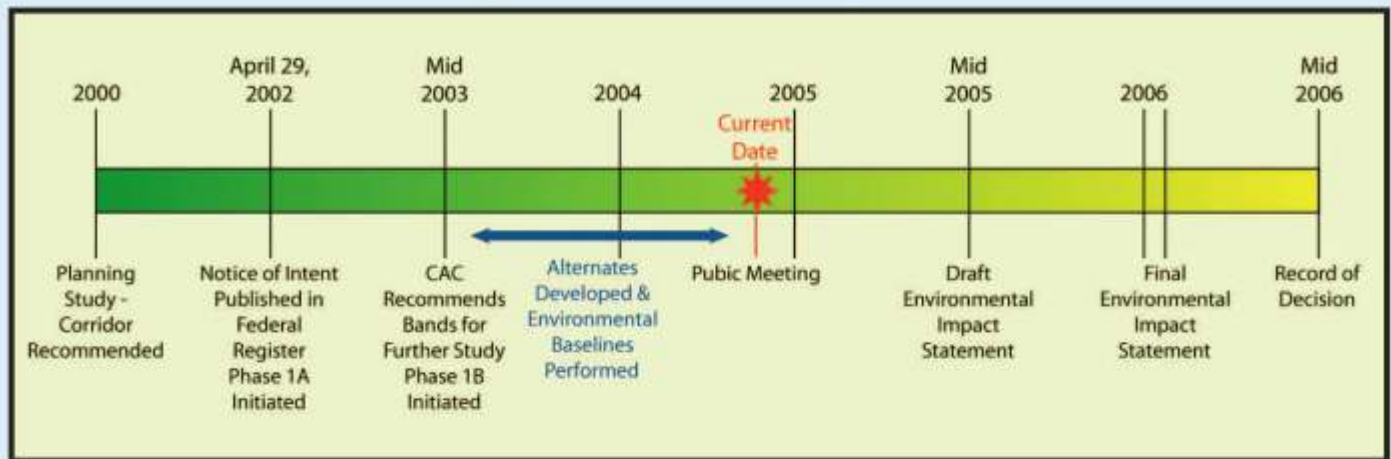
Public Involvement

As you may know, public involvement is a key component in the development of any transportation project. As part of our public involvement program, the KYTC has endeavored to present the public many different opportunities and methods to obtain information and to provide input on this project. This newsletter* is but one of our "tools" that we use for this purpose. Other tools and/or methods that the Cabinet has used and will continue to use are:

- **Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)** - A group of 20 local citizen representatives has been created to represent other citizens affected or otherwise interested in this project. The purpose of the group is to assess detailed information presented by the KYTC and its consultants, voice the ideas and concerns of members of the community, and make formal recommendations to the KYTC regarding project alternatives. Comments and concerns can be submitted to any CAC member, who in turn, will submit those comments to the Project Manager. Nine meetings have been held to date.
- **Project Newsletter** - The first newsletter for this project, which was mailed to approximately 12,000 people, was published in June 2003.
- **Public Meetings** - During Phase I designs, two series of public meetings were held June 17 & 18, 2002 and July 22 & 24, 2003.

*This is the second in a series of newsletters expected to be published throughout the environmental and design phases of this project.

Project Timetable



Engineering Update

Over the past year, project designers have been developing preliminary alternatives for proposed I-66. The alternates have been developed from the Citizens Advisory Committee Bands that were recommended last summer. The recommended bands represented an approximate area 1,000 feet in width. The alternates that were developed within these bands represent a much smaller area, ranging from approximately 200 to 400 feet in width, depending on the terrain. The alternates have been engineered to interstate standards and represent the approximate location where I-66 can be located within the bands. Alternates have been developed within the bands to avoid or minimize impacts to various environmental and social factors, such as relocations, impacts to historical properties, impacts to the natural environment, and other environmental factors. The alternates are preliminary at this point and will be refined as new environmental and other information is identified in order to minimize environmental impacts.

Definitions

CORRIDORS

3 -4 mile wide areas identified in the Planning Study in 2000. The N-4 corridor from the planning study was recommended for further study.

BANDS

1,000 feet wide areas within the recommended corridor developed during Phase 1A of the project in 2003.

ALTERNATES

Approximately 200 to 400 feet wide areas within the bands that represent the preliminary location where I-66 may be located within the bands.



KY-192

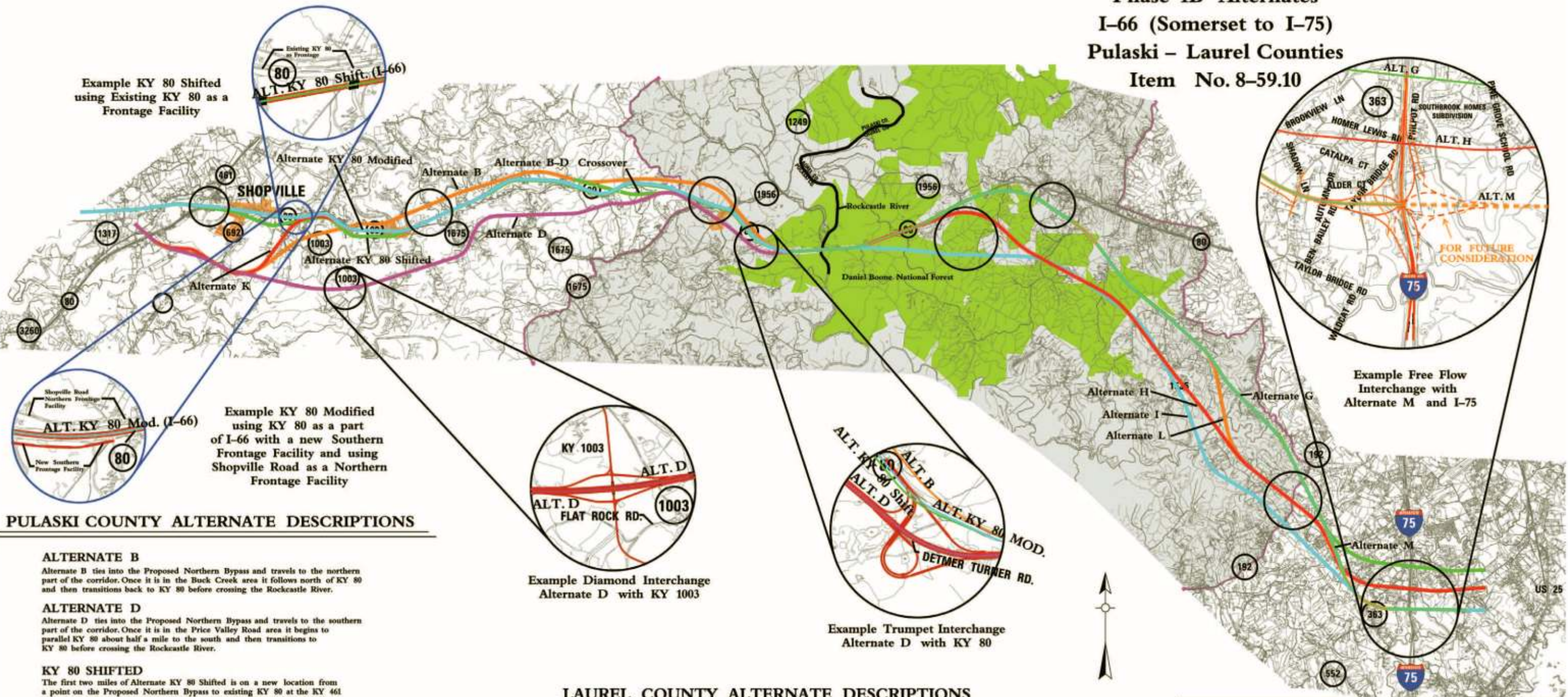


KY-80 at KY-461



Shopville

Phase 1B Alternates
I-66 (Somerset to I-75)
Pulaski – Laurel Counties
Item No. 8-59.10



PULASKI COUNTY ALTERNATE DESCRIPTIONS

ALTERNATE B
Alternate B ties into the Proposed Northern Bypass and travels to the northern part of the corridor. Once it is in the Buck Creek area it follows north of KY 80 and then transitions back to KY 80 before crossing the Rockcastle River.

ALTERNATE D
Alternate D ties into the Proposed Northern Bypass and travels to the southern part of the corridor. Once it is in the Price Valley Road area it begins to parallel KY 80 about half a mile to the south and then transitions to KY 80 before crossing the Rockcastle River.

KY 80 SHIFTED
The first two miles of Alternate KY 80 Shifted is on a new location from a point on the Proposed Northern Bypass to existing KY 80 at the KY 461 Intersection. The Alternate runs parallel to KY 80 while utilizing KY 80 as a frontage road throughout the alignment. It transitions back to KY 80 about 4000' past Tommy Rock Church Road before crossing the Rockcastle River.

KY 80 MODIFIED
The first two miles of Alternate KY 80 Modified is on a new location from a point on the Proposed Northern Bypass to existing KY 80 at the KY 461 Intersection. This Alternate utilizes KY 80 as part of the Interstate while providing a frontage road throughout the alignment to the north. This alignment crosses the Rockcastle River at KY 80.

ALTERNATE K
Alternate K follows Alternate B to Doolin Knob then travels north and follows KY 80 Modified to the Rockcastle River.

ALTERNATE B-D CROSSOVER
Alternate B-D Crossover follows Alternate B until it is in the Price Valley Road area. It then travels approximately 1.7 miles, crossing KY 80, and joins Alternate D 3300' prior to Sandy Gap Road. It then continues to follow Alternate D until it crosses the Rockcastle River.

LAUREL COUNTY ALTERNATE DESCRIPTIONS

ALTERNATE G
Alternate G utilizes the existing crossing at the Rockcastle River and follows KY 80 for 3 miles before turning to the southeast and tying to I-75 at the eastern terminus. Alternate G is the northern most of the three recommended alternates in Laurel County.

ALTERNATE H
Alternate H utilizes the existing crossing at the Rockcastle River and follows KY 80 for 1.5 miles before turning southeast and transitioning to I-75. Alternate H is the middle of the three recommended alternates in Laurel County.

ALTERNATE I
Alternate I travels in an easterly direction after crossing the Rockcastle River at the existing location using 0.5 miles of the KY 80 corridor and transitions east to I-75. Alternate I stays south of Willie Green Road and crosses KY 192 north of Cold Hill School. Alternate I is the southern most of the three recommended alternates in Laurel County.

ALTERNATE L
Alternate L begins by following Alternate G from the Rockcastle River to KY 1535. The alignment then turns South to cross Sinking Creek and joins Alternate H approximately 1400' prior to Willie Green Road. After crossing Maple Grove Road, Alternate L continues South to intersect Alternate I close to D. Sizemore Road and follows Alternate I to I-75 and the end of the project. This option uses the interchange layout of Alternate G for KY 80, Alternate H for KY 192, and Alternate I for the I-75 interchange layout.

ALTERNATE M
Alternate M follows Alternate G from the Rockcastle River to approximately Gregory Lane and continues South to join Alternate I close to D. Sizemore Road. Alternate M follows Alternate I to I-75 and the end of the project. This option uses the interchange layout of Alternate G for KY 80 and KY 192 while moving to Alternate I for the I-75 interchange layout.

LEGEND

Alternate B	Alternate G
Alternate D	Alternate H
Alternate B-D Crossover	Alternate I
Alternate KY 80 Modified	Alternate L
Alternate KY 80 Shifted	Alternate M
Alternate K	Interchange Locations
Communities	KY 80 Alternates
Daniel Boone National Forest Area	Land Owned By Daniel Boone National Forest